The Dun & Bradstreet Corporation

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BUSINESS STARTS DECLINE 5.7 PERCENT IN FEBRUARY; SLIGHT GAINS REPORTED ON BOTH COASTS

NEW YORK, March 19--Business starts declined 5.7 percent in February to 18,691 from 19,818 in the same month a year ago, according to The Dun & Bradstreet Corporation.

"While business starts in February were off compared with the year-ago period, they were up slightly over January of this year," said Joseph W. Duncan, corporate economist and chief statistician for The Dun & Bradstreet Corporation. "Though the pattern of new business activity has been slightly weaker this year, it is still too early to detect a definitive trend," he said.

From a regional perspective, the largest decline in starts was reported in the oil-producing West South Central states, down 24.7 percent in February to 2,001 from 2,658 a year ago. Most of the decline in the region was accounted for by Texas, where starts for the month were down 28.7 percent to 1,384 from 1,942. In the Mountain states, which also contain a high level of energy-related businesses, starts were off by 1.1 percent to 1,162 from 1,175.

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The second largest decline in starts was reported in the New England states, down 11.2 percent to 1,003 from 1,130 in February 1986. The decrease in New England is attributable to Massachusetts and Connecticut, where the number of starts was down 21.0 percent and 12.0 percent, respectively.

Two regions reported gains in the number of starts. In the Pacific states, starts were up 3.7 percent to 3,008 from 2,900. Despite declines in Alaska, Hawaii and Oregon, the region experienced a gain due to Washington and California, where starts were up 16.2 percent and 5.7 percent, respectively. The other region to report an increase was the Middle Atlantic states, up 2.6 percent to 3,152 from 3,072.

Trends in business starts among the other regions were as follows: the East North Central states, down 6.6 percent to 2,638 from 2,823; the West North Central states, down 7.0 percent to 1,075 from 1,156; the South Atlantic states, down 4.0 percent to 3,647 from 3,799; and the East South Central states, down 9.0 percent to 1,005 from 1,105.

Among individual states, Rhode Island had the largest increase, up 56.3 percent; followed by Nevada, up 43.3 percent; and Maryland, up 28.8 percent. South Dakota reported the largest decline, down 42.9 percent; followed by Oregon, down 29.3 percent; and Texas, down 28.7 percent.

From an industry viewpoint, the finance, insurance and real estate sector was the only sector to report an increase for the month, up 4.9 percent to 1,310 from 1,249. The mining sector, which includes the oil and gas extraction industry, reported the largest decline, down 23.1 percent to 123 from 160.

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The trends in starts for the other industry sectors in February were as follows: agriculture, forestry and fishing, down 2.9 percent to 299 from 308; construction, down 4.7 percent to 2,412 from 2,532; manufacturing, down 4.0 percent to 1,573 from 1,639; transportation and public utilities, down 3.2 percent to 640 from 661; wholesale trade, down 13.2 percent to 1,933 from 2,227; retail trade, down 8.4 percent to 5,297 from 5,785; and services, down 7.8 percent to 4,349 from 4,716.

Business starts in February created 89,814 new jobs, a 3.5 percent decline from the 93,099 jobs created by new starts in February 1986.

Dun & Bradstreet's new business starts series supersedes D&B's previous business starts statistical series. It is based on new entries to D&B's commercial credit information file, which currently contains data on more than nine million U.S. firms that account for well over 90 percent of total U.S. employment.

The Dun & Bradstreet Corporation is the world's largest marketer of business information and services, with worldwide revenue of $3.1 billion in 1986.

(See Attached Tabular Data)

THE DUN & BRADSTREET CORPORATION - Economic Analysis Department

Business Starts by States and Regions
February 1986 vs. February 1987

	1986	1987	% Change
New England	1,130	1,003	-11.2%
Maine	75	78	4.0%
New Hampshire	125	117	-6.4%
Vermont	47	44	-6.4%
Massachusetts	509	402	-21.0%
Connecticut	326	287	-12.0%
Rhode Island	48	75	56.3%
Middle Atlantic	3,072	3,152	2.6%
New York	1,579	1,540	-2.5%
New Jersey	732	778	6.3%
Pennsylvania	761	834	9.6%
East North Central	2,823	2,638	-6.6%
Ohio	732	633	-13.5%
Indiana	286	326	14.0%
Illinois	897	780	-13.0%
Michigan	665	608	-8.6%
Wisconsin	243	291	19.8%
West North Central	1,156	1,075	-7.0%
Minnesota	279	254	-9.0%
Iowa	134	142	6.0%
Missouri	379	326	-14.0%
North Dakota	32	41	28.1%
South Dakota	56	32	-42.9%
Nebraska	93	91	-2.2%
Kansas	183	189	3.3%
South Atlantic	3,799	3,647	-4.0%
Maryland	351	452	28.8%
Delaware	51	62	21.6%
District of Columbia	61	86	41.0%
Virginia	496	457	-7.9%
West Virginia	96	106	10.4%
North Carolina	386	424	9.8%
South Carolina	242	252	4.1%
Georgia	568	610	7.4%
Florida	1,548	1,198	-22.6%

THE DUN & BRADSTREET CORPORATION - Economic Analysis Department

Business Starts by States and Regions
February 1986 vs. February 1987

	1986	1987	% Change
East South Central	1,105	1,005	-9.0%
Kentucky	300	238	-20.7%
Tennessee	351	340	-3.1%
Alabama	312	278	-10.9%
Mississippi	142	149	4.9%
West South Central	2,658	2,001	-24.7%
Arkansas	165	163	-1.2%
Oklahoma	239	188	-21.3%
Louisiana	312	266	-14.7%
Texas	1,942	1,384	-28.7%
Mountain	1,175	1,162	-1.1%
Montana	47	51	8.5%
Idaho	75	55	-26.7%
Wyoming	47	35	-25.5%
Colorado	346	365	5.5%
New Mexico	116	95	-18.1%
Arizona	348	321	-7.8%
Utah	129	144	11.6%
Nevada	67	96	43.3%
Pacific	2,900	3,008	3.7%
Alaska	46	40	-13.0%
Hawaii	75	65	-13.3%
Washington	358	416	16.2%
Oregon	208	147	-29.3%
California	2,213	2,340	5.7%
Total United States	19,818	18,691	-5.7%

Source: The Dun & Bradstreet Corporation, Economic Analysis Department

THE DUN & BRADSTREET CORPORATION - ECONOMIC ANALYSIS DEPARTMENT

U.S. Business Starts by industry sector
February 1986 vs. February 1987

	1986	1987	% Change
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	308	299	-2.9%
Mining	160	123	-23.1%
Construction	2,532	2,412	-4.7%
Manufacturing	1,639	1,573	-4.0%
Transportation & public utilities	661	640	-3.2%
Wholesale trade	2,227	1,933	-13.2%
Retail trade	5,785	5,297	-8.4%
Finance, insurance & real estate	1,249	1,310	4.9%
Services	4,716	4,349	-7.8%
Unclassifiable establishments	541	755	
Total	19,818	18,691	-5.7%

Source: The Dun & Bradstreet Corporation, Economic Analysis Department

THE DUN & BRADSTREET CORPORATION - ECONOMIC ANALYSIS DEPARTMENT

U.S. BUSINESS STARTS IN 25 LARGEST CITIES

	February 1986		February 1987	
	Number	Employment	Number	Employment
New York, NY	394	1,589	391	1,623
Chicago, IL	246	1,161	191	675
Los Angeles, CA	202	929	213	985
Philadelphia, PA	107	419	122	412
Detroit, MI	52	170	61	274
Houston, TX	338	1,425	231	1,216
Baltimore, MD	101	432	130	301
Dallas, TX	190	1,254	131	1,061
Washington, DC	81	316	86	315
Cleveland, OH	116	406	105	501
Indianapolis, IN	50	261	78	253
Milwaukee, WI	57	204	52	637
San Francisco, CA	73	451	36	246
San Diego, CA	79	302	94	718
San Antonio, TX	127	845	89	376
Boston, MA	47	180	55	461
Memphis, TN	66	493	52	394
St. Louis, MO	92	635	83	572
New Orleans, LA	23	159	35	135
Phoenix, AZ	111	684	105	584
Columbus, OH	49	240	48	206
Seattle, WA	97	524	101	309
Jacksonville, FL	54	464	56	290
Pittsburgh, PA	65	228	75	297
Denver, CO	111	495	93	567
TOTAL 25 CITIES	2,928	14,055	2,823	13,346
BALANCE OF COUNTRY	10,390	79,044	15,868	76,468
TOTAL UNITED STATES	13,818	93,099	18,691	89,814

NOTE: This compilation covers all businesses with a 1987, 1986 or 1985 starting date added to the Dun & Bradstreet business data file in February 1987. It includes newly opened establishments. It does not include changes in ownership of previously operating businesses or changes in name, location, legal type or mergers. Last year's figures are official, this year's are preliminary.

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